

### **REMARKS**

The Office Action dated January 18, 2007 has been received and duly noted. Claim 1 has been amended to be clear that the metacarpal internal pad is positioned on and attached to an external casing, and Claim 16 has been amended to recite that the hinge system has a shell with a plurality of apertures in the shell. Claims 11 and 12 have been revised to reflect common terminology (extension and flexing) for upward and downward motion of the device.

Various claims were rejected as being anticipated by Rosenblatt. The Examiner indicated, however, that Claim 2 would be allowable if written in independent form, and Claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of Claim 2. Applicant thus submits that amended Claim 1 and dependant Claims 3-5, 9-13 and 22 should be in condition for allowance.

Claim 17 was also indicated to be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claim 17 has been cancelled and its limitations have been included in amended Claim 16. Accordingly, amended Claim 16 and dependant Claims 18-21 should be in condition for allowance.

Claim 23 was rejected by the Examiner, and this rejection is traversed. Most importantly, Claim 23 is similar to original Claim 1 in combination with the feature of Claim 10, which the Examiner recognized as patentable. Applicant thus submits that Claim 23 should be patentable since Claim 10 was considered patentable. The cited art does not disclose an orthotic device as recited in Claim 23 wherein the metacarpal unit swivels in a lateral fashion due to the hinge

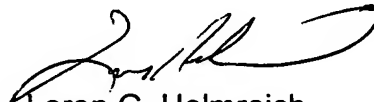
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Reply to Office Action of January 18, 2007

system. Independent Claim 23 and dependant Claims 24-26 should thus be in condition for allowance.

Newly added Claim 27 is similar to original Claim 1, except that it recites a plurality of apertures in the support member, while Claim 1 recites an aperture in the support member. Claim 27 includes the limitation of Claim 9, which the Examiner indicated would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Accordingly, Applicant submits that new Claim 27 and dependant Claims 28-30 should in condition for allowance.

In view of the above, early allowance of the application is requested.

Respectfully submitted,



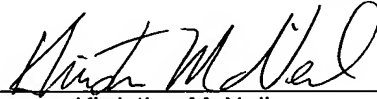
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I certify that this document is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to Commissioner of Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 [37 CFR 1.8(a)] on February 12, 2007.



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